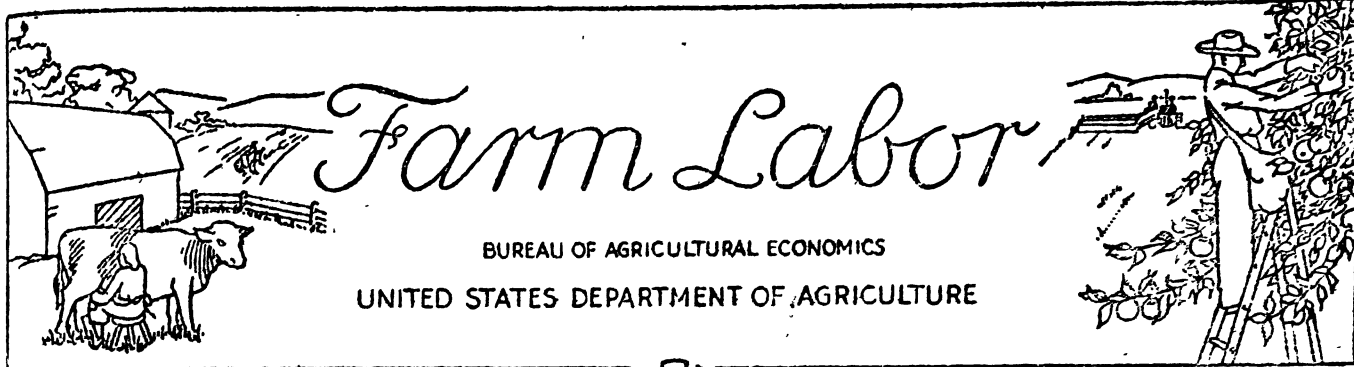


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BUREAU OF AGRICULTURAL ECONOMICS
 UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Washington, D. C.



April 10, 1953

FARM EMPLOYMENT UP SEASONALLY
 WAGE RATES ABOVE LAST YEAR

Farm employment showed about the usual seasonal increase from February with a total of 8,835,000 people engaged in farm work during the week of March 22-28, the Bureau of Agricultural Economics reported today. The total was 1,232,000 above a month earlier and 45,000 above a year earlier. This is the first month since October 1948 that total farm employment has shown an increase over the corresponding month a year earlier. This increase can be attributed to the very favorable weather during the survey week which permitted field work in nearly all parts of the country.

The number of family workers increased 11 percent from February to March and the number of hired workers increased 43 percent. A total of 7,140,000 family workers were employed at farm work during the survey week and 1,695,000 hired workers were doing farm work.

Farm wage rates, for the country as a whole, averaged 2 percent above a year earlier on about April 1. The weighted hourly average of all rates rose 1 cent to \$.581. This is one of the smallest increases over a year earlier that has been reported at any time in the last two years. It is probable that the decrease in prices received by farmers the last several months has limited the increase in farm wage rates.

Changes from a year ago in farm wage rates varied by regions. In the East South Central region, the average of all rates was a little under a year ago. In this region, one of the individual types of rates was down from last year and the other types were the same. Hourly rates in the West South Central States averaged the same as a year ago for one rate and less for the other. In this region and in the Mountain States, all rates averaged only 1 percent more than a year earlier. In the Middle Atlantic and East North Central States, farm wage rates averaged 5 percent above a year earlier.

Individual types of wage rates ordinarily are higher on April 1 than on January 1, except in the South. This was generally true this year except for both monthly rates in New England and one of the monthly rates in both the Middle Atlantic and Pacific States. However, the seasonally adjusted index of farm wage rates for the country as a whole was 1 percent lower on April 1 than on January 1. This probably due to less than usual increases in rates that usually rise and greater than usual declines in those rates that drop during this season. Another factor is the more than seasonal increase in hired workers

in the South. The South had a higher proportion of hired farm workers this year in late March than a year ago. Since rates average lower in the South this increased proportion of workers in lower wage rate areas tended to hold down the national average more than usual.

Individual types of rates for the country as a whole, averaged less on April 1 than on January 1 except for weekly rates which were slightly higher. This drop in average rates from January 1 is partly due to a shift in the proportion of hired farm workers in the South. In January, about 40 percent of the hired farm workers in the Nation were employed in the South while on April 1, about 60 percent were in the South. However, individual types of rates usually average less in the South in April as more lower paid field hands are employed in contrast to more skilled and year-round workers in January. This year was no exception as only one individual rate in the three southern regions increased from January to April, two types of rates were the same and the remaining rates lower. The East and West North Central and the Mountain States were the only regions in which each of the reported rates averaged higher on April 1 than on January 1.

By late March, farm work was generally off to a fast start in nearly all parts of the country. Most of the country experienced a relatively mild, open winter with weather and soil conditions permitting considerable field work to be done during March. Field work during late March was reported as general in all areas except the New England and Middle Atlantic Coast States where heavy rainfall rendered soils too wet for field activity. For the country as a whole, spring work was reported to be about two weeks ahead of normal.

Oat seedings were nearly completed as far north as Nebraska and were well advanced in the belt of States extending from Nebraska to Pennsylvania. States in the northern parts of the country were preparing land for the seeding of spring grains with some early spring grains already seeded in the Northern Mountain States and the Pacific Northwest. Southern States reported general field activity except in Arkansas and Tennessee where rains during the survey week prevented field work. Corn and cotton were being planted in the Southern Atlantic and Gulf Coast States extending from North Carolina to Texas. Some early planted fields in this area were up to good stands and were receiving the first cultivation. Cotton was also being planted in New Mexico, Arizona and California. Sugar beet planting was in progress in all areas of production and was well advanced for the season.

Harvest operations during the survey week consisted largely of picking citrus and harvesting winter vegetables in Florida, the lower valley of Texas and in California. Cabbage and strawberry harvests were also getting under way in the southern part of Alabama.

The number of persons working on farms during the week of March 22-28 was greater than a year ago owing to increases in both family and hired workers with hired workers accounting for about 85 percent of the increase. The number of persons working on farms was greater than a year earlier in the West North Central, South Central and Mountain States as mild weather permitted farmers to make good progress with spring field work. In absolute numbers, the West North Central and West South Central Regions showed the greatest increase with the

increase due largely to family workers. On a percentage basis, the Mountain States showed the largest increase. The East South Central Region showed a net increase over a year ago as a decline in family workers was more than offset by a rather sharp increase in hired workers. Fewer persons were working on farms in the New England, Middle Atlantic, East North Central and South Atlantic Regions as rains during the latter part of March delayed spring field work. The number of persons doing farm work in the Pacific States was reported to be the same as a year ago.

The seasonal increase of 16 percent in total farm employment was spread over all regions. The largest percentage increases took place in the East and West South Central States where seasonal work progressed quite rapidly. The smallest increases, ranging from 6 to 13 percent, occurred in the New England, Middle Atlantic, East and West North Central and Pacific Regions. Increases were less than usual in only the New England States. Of the increase of more than 1.2 million persons, more than 300,000 occurred in the East South Central States, nearly 300,000 in the West South Central Region, over 200,000 in the South Atlantic States and more than 100,000 in the West and East North Central States.

The number of family workers was up from last month for all regions. Increases ranged from 5 to 9 percent for all regions except the Mountain with a rise of 14 percent and the East and West South Central with increases of 20 percent.

The number of hired workers employed on farms in late March was up more than a half million from a month earlier. More than half of the increase was accounted for by the South Atlantic and East South Central Regions with each Region reporting increase of more than 100,000 hired workers. On a percentage basis, the largest increase occurred in the South Central States where it amounted to more than 50 percent. There were from a fourth to a half more hired workers in the New England, North Central, South Atlantic, Mountain and Pacific States. The smallest increase, amounting to 10 percent, was in the Middle Atlantic States. The seasonal rise in the number of hired farm workers was more than the average of recent years in all regions except the New England, Middle Atlantic, West South Central and Pacific Regions.

Beginning this month, new factors will be used to adjust the indexes of farm wage rates for seasonal variation. The United States factor for April 1 has been raised from 86 to 88. The factor for October 1 has been lowered from 106 to 104. The factors for the United States used for January 1 and July 1 will remain the same as those used in recent years -- the January 1 factor stays at 107 and the July 1 factor stays at 101. The effect of this will be to make the index of farm wage rates a little lower than it would be on April 1, if the old factors were used and correspondingly higher than it otherwise would be on October 1 if the old factors were used. The annual average is not affected. This change reflects changes in the actual seasonal variation of farm wage rates observed during the last two years, to the extent that they affect the seasonal averages for the last five years.

Actual farm wage rates, figured on an hourly basis, are usually higher in January than in April for two reasons: First, because workers who are paid by day, week or month usually work fewer hours and therefore get more pay per hour in January than they do in April; second, because the share of all hired farm workers, employed in areas where wage rates are relatively low, is greater in April than in January.

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
Bureau of Agricultural Economics

DEFINITIONS AND EXPLANATIONS

Employment

Farm employment estimates of the Bureau of Agricultural Economics cover persons doing farm work on all farms. Mailed questionnaires are received every month from 15,000 to 20,000 farmers who report the number of persons working on their farms. Interview surveys of farmers are used less frequently to provide bench mark data on employment. The survey week for the mailed questionnaire each month is the last complete calendar week in the month except when that week includes the last day of the month; in that case, the survey week is the next to the last full calendar week.

Employment concepts

All farm operators are counted as employed if they spend one hour or more during the survey week at farm work, chores, or in the transaction of farm business. Members of the operator's family or household doing unpaid farm work or chores, are counted if they put in 15 hours or more during the survey week. Operators plus unpaid members of their families or households who meet these criteria of employment are called family workers. All persons doing one or more hours of farm work or chores for pay during the survey week are counted as hired workers. Members of the operator's family doing farm work for cash wages are counted as hired workers. Croppers are considered family workers when working on their own crops, but hired workers when doing farm work for pay off their own tracts. If a person is employed both as a family worker and a hired worker during the week on the same farm, he is counted as a hired worker.

Comparability with other data

The data on farm employment published by the Bureau of Agricultural Economics differ from those on agricultural employment published by the Bureau of the Census in the Monthly Report On The Labor Force. The Bureau of Agricultural Economics collects information from the employer (the farmer) who reports the number of persons working on his farm during the week regardless of the other jobs held by those workers. The Census data, on the other hand, are obtained through interviews with approximately 25,000 farm and nonfarm households with the housewife or some other member of the household reporting on the labor force status of the household members. They relate only to persons 14 years of age and over, who are in the civilian population and not in institutions.

The difference between the Bureau of Agricultural Economics and the Census data is attributable mainly to the different treatment of three groups of workers. Children under 14 years of age who meet the criteria

of employment are included in the Bureau of Agricultural Economics estimates, but not in the Census Bureau's. It is estimated that this number may reach a summer peak as high as two million. Persons working on more than one farm during the survey week are counted only once by the Census Bureau, but they are counted by the Bureau of Agricultural Economics on each farm where they work and meet the minimum hour requirements. This group is also more numerous during the harvest season when the demand for farm labor is greatest. The additional count of workers attributable to this duplication is estimated at a minimum of a quarter of a million and may be considerably larger. The third group is composed of persons who work in both agricultural and nonagricultural employment, but work longer at the nonagricultural job; they are classified by Census as working on nonagricultural employment, but by the Bureau of Agricultural Economics as working on a farm. This last group may range from one-half million to a million in different seasons of the year.

Other groups counted by the Bureau of Agricultural Economics but not by the Census Bureau are imported foreign workers and some migratory workers not living in private households. On the other hand, the Census Bureau includes in its estimates of agricultural employment certain classes of workers which the Bureau of Agricultural Economics does not include. Persons with "nonfarm" occupations who are working on farms, such as bookkeepers and typists, some persons in certain agricultural processing activities, and farm operators with no other job who did no farm work are considered as employed in agriculture by the Census Bureau, but are not included by the Bureau of Agricultural Economics in its estimates of agricultural employment.

Because the volume of agricultural employment is affected by changes both in season and in weather, the difference in the week of the month for which the data are collected may also make some difference. The Bureau of Agricultural Economics data relate to the last full calendar week ending at least one day before the end of the month while the Census Bureau information relates to the week containing the 8th of the month.

The Bureau of Agricultural Economics estimates farm employment from current reports made by a selected group of farmers adjusted to enumerative survey bench mark data. The Bureau of the Census bases its figures on a sample of dwelling units. Accordingly, the figures in both cases are subject to a sampling variation and may differ from the results of a complete census.

Wage rates

Wage rates are reported quarterly by the same sample of farm operators that reports employment. The farmer is asked to report average wage rates being paid "at this time" in his locality. The "at this time" on the average probably represents the second or third day before the end of the month.

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
Bureau of Agricultural Economics

Farm employment: Persons employed during week of March
22-28, 1953, United States, with comparisons

	March average 1948-52 1/	March 23-29, 1952	February 15-21, 1953	March 22-28, 1953
FARM EMPLOYMENT (Thousands of persons):				
Total	9,294	8,790	7,603	8,835
Family labor	7,560	7,133	6,415	7,140
Hired labor	1,734	1,657	1,188	1,695
FARM EMPLOYMENT INDEXES (Adjusted for: seasonal variation, 1910-14 = 100)				
Total	88	83	82	83
Family labor	89	84	83	84
Hired labor	82	78	75	80

1/ Employment during the last full calendar week ending at least one day before the end of the month.

Farm wage rates: Wage rates, indexes and related data,
April 1, 1953, with comparisons 1/

	January 1, 1952	April 1, 1952	January 1, 1953	April 1, 1953
FARM WAGE RATES				
Per month with board and room	\$116.00	\$114.00	\$121.00	\$119.00
Per month with house	141.00	138.00	148.00	144.00
Per week with board and room	27.25	28.00	28.75	29.00
Per week without board or room ...	35.00	34.75	35.75	36.25
Per day with board and room	5.00	4.55	5.10	4.70
Per day with house	4.20	4.00	4.30	4.00
Per day without board or room	5.20	5.00	5.30	5.00
Per hour with house65	.61	.68	.63
Per hour without board or room86	.83	.89	.85
Composite rate per hour 2/693	.571	.715	.581
FARM WAGE RATE INDEXES (1910-14=100)				
Adjusted for seasonal variation	498	510	514	508
RELATED INDEXES (1910-14 = 100)				
Prices received by farmers 3/	302	289	268	264 *
Ratio of prices received to farm wage rates	61	57	52	52

1/ Wage rates on the average refer to a date two or three days before the first of the month.

2/ Weighted average of all rates on a per hour basis.

3/ Average of the 15th of the given and the 15th of the previous month.

* March 15, 1953.

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
Bureau of Agricultural Economics

Farm employment: Persons employed during week of March 22-28, 1953,
United States and geographic divisions, with comparisons

Geographic division	March	February	March	February	March
	average	17-23,	23-29,	15-21,	22-28,
	1948-52 1/	1952	1952	1953	1953
	Thousands	Thousands	Thousands	Thousands	Thousands
TOTAL FARM EMPLOYMENT					
United States	9,294	7,688	8,790	7,603	8,835
New England	206	181	205	177	195
Middle Atlantic	540	502	536	505	533
East North Central	1,408	1,249	1,361	1,227	1,356
West North Central	1,582	1,367	1,474	1,367	1,499
South Atlantic	1,903	1,518	1,746	1,463	1,708
East South Central	1,465	1,096	1,396	1,106	1,417
West South Central	1,447	1,129	1,361	1,124	1,400
Mountain	307	265	290	261	306
Pacific	436	381	421	373	421

FAMILY WORKERS 2/					
United States	7,560	6,495	7,133	6,415	7,140
New England	153	142	149	138	145
Middle Atlantic	437	412	432	415	434
East North Central	1,226	1,110	1,190	1,098	1,183
West North Central	1,431	1,268	1,339	1,275	1,368
South Atlantic	1,448	1,202	1,303	1,167	1,271
East South Central	1,157	909	1,098	897	1,072
West South Central	1,192	986	1,132	971	1,164
Mountain	244	215	228	209	239
Pacific	272	251	262	245	264

HIRED WORKERS 3/					
United States	1,734	1,193	1,657	1,188	1,695
New England	53	39	56	39	50
Middle Atlantic	103	90	104	90	99
East North Central	182	139	171	129	173
West North Central	151	99	135	92	131
South Atlantic	455	316	443	296	437
East South Central	308	187	298	209	345
West South Central	255	143	229	153	236
Mountain	63	50	62	52	67
Pacific	164	130	159	128	157

1/ Persons employed during the last full calendar week ending at least one day before the end of the month.

2/ Includes farm operators doing one or more hours of farm work and members of their families working 15 hours or more during the survey week without cash wages.

3/ Includes all persons doing one or more hours of farm work during the survey week for pay.

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
Bureau of Agricultural Economics

Farm employment: Average number of persons employed per month, January through March 1953, United States and geographic divisions, with comparisons 1/

Geographic division	1948-52	1950	1951	1952	1953
	Thousands	Thousands	Thousands	Thousands	Thousands
TOTAL FARM EMPLOYMENT					
United States	8,244	8,335	7,965	7,768	7,720
New England	189	188	183	188	180
Middle Atlantic	507	509	503	500	499
East North Central	1,290	1,293	1,254	1,246	1,230
West North Central	1,454	1,463	1,407	1,371	1,374
South Atlantic	1,625	1,649	1,558	1,506	1,451
East South Central	1,240	1,266	1,185	1,133	1,155
West South Central	1,264	1,292	1,213	1,178	1,184
Mountain	274	276	269	260	264
Pacific	401	399	393	386	383
FAMILY WORKERS ^{2/}					
United States	6,919	6,993	6,689	6,510	6,457
New England	147	145	141	143	139
Middle Atlantic	415	415	408	408	410
East North Central	1,141	1,141	1,115	1,108	1,094
West North Central	1,337	1,344	1,294	1,263	1,272
South Atlantic	1,290	1,314	1,236	1,184	1,142
East South Central	1,025	1,044	982	932	926
West South Central	1,079	1,102	1,042	1,014	1,014
Mountain	222	223	216	209	211
Pacific	263	265	255	249	249
HIRED WORKERS ^{3/}					
United States	1,325	1,342	1,276	1,258	1,263
New England	42	43	42	45	41
Middle Atlantic	92	94	95	92	89
East North Central	149	152	139	138	136
West North Central	117	119	113	108	102
South Atlantic	335	335	322	322	309
East South Central	215	222	203	201	229
West South Central	185	190	171	164	170
Mountain	52	53	53	51	53
Pacific	138	134	138	137	134

1/ Persons employed during the last full calendar week ending at least one day before the end of the month.

2/ Includes farm operators doing one or more hours of farm work and members of their families working 15 hours or more during the survey week without cash wages.

3/ Includes all persons doing one or more hours of farm work during the survey week for pay.

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
Bureau of Agricultural Economics

Farm wage rates; Wage rates by geographic divisions
 April 1, 1953, with comparisons

Geographic division	January 1,	April 1,	January 1,	April 1,
	1952	1952	1953	1953
	Dollars	Dollars	Dollars	Dollars
PER MONTH WITH BOARD AND ROOM				
New England	112.00	120.00	122.00	118.00
Middle Atlantic	107.00	111.00	116.00	118.00
East North Central	110.00	117.00	116.00	122.00
West North Central	114.00	122.00	115.00	125.00
Mountain	137.00	144.00	142.00	154.00
Pacific	164.00	167.00	172.00	175.00
PER MONTH WITH HOUSE				
New England	146.00	151.00	156.00	152.00
Middle Atlantic	148.00	151.00	156.00	160.00
East North Central	142.00	150.00	151.00	161.00
West North Central	140.00	152.00	146.00	156.00
Mountain	178.00	185.00	191.00	195.00
Pacific	217.00	218.00	225.00	223.00
PER WEEK WITH BOARD AND ROOM				
New England	30.50	32.00	32.50	32.50
Middle Atlantic	28.00	29.75	31.00	31.50
PER WEEK WITHOUT BOARD OR ROOM				
New England	42.00	43.00	43.75	44.00
Middle Atlantic	38.50	39.75	41.75	42.75
PER DAY WITH BOARD AND ROOM				
East North Central	5.40	5.50	5.60	5.90
West North Central	5.70	6.00	5.80	6.30
PER DAY WITH HOUSE				
South Atlantic	3.95	4.00	4.10	4.20
East South Central	3.25	3.25	3.40	3.25
West South Central	4.55	4.45	4.65	4.60
PER DAY WITHOUT BOARD OR ROOM				
New England	7.30	7.50	7.60	7.70
Middle Atlantic	6.90	7.00	7.30	7.30
East North Central	6.90	7.10	7.10	7.30
West North Central	7.20	7.60	7.40	7.90
South Atlantic	4.80	4.60	4.85	4.80
East South Central	3.90	3.95	3.95	3.90
West South Central	5.20	5.10	5.30	5.20
Mountain	7.10	7.40	7.20	7.60
PER HOUR WITH HOUSE				
South Atlantic54	.54	.55	.55
East South Central44	.44	.47	.44
West South Central57	.54	.58	.54
Pacific96	.97	.98	1.00
PER HOUR WITHOUT BOARD OR ROOM				
New England96	.97	1.01	1.01
Middle Atlantic89	.92	.94	.95
East North Central92	.95	.97	.98
West North Central95	.96	.96	.98
South Atlantic62	.62	.64	.64
East South Central54	.54	.56	.54
West South Central66	.64	.66	.63
Mountain83	.91	.87	.95
Pacific	1.03	1.04	1.06	1.08

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IN THIS ISSUE

	<u>Page</u>
Text	1 - 3
Definitions and Explanations	4 - 5
Farm employment: Persons employed during week of March 22-28, 1953, United States, with comparisons	6
Farm wage rates: Wage rates, indexes and related data, April 1, 1953, with comparisons	6
Farm employment: Persons employed during week of March 22-28, 1953, United States and geographic divisions, with comparisons	7
Farm employment: Average number of persons employed per month, Janu- ary through March, 1953, United States and geographic divisions, with comparisons	8
Farm wage rates: Wage rates by geographic divisions, April 1, 1953, with comparisons	9
Farm wage rates: Wage rates by States and regions, April 1, 1952 and April 1, 1953	10-11
